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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 AGRE-00 COME-00 EB-08 LAB-04 SIL-01 /072 W
----------079306 230521Z /20
R 221100Z SEP 77
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3130
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL OPORTO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA
USMISSION NATO
DIA WASHDC
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAGR, PINT, PO
SUBJ: POLICE AND COLLECTIVE FARM WORKERS CLASH AGAIN
IN THE ALENTEJO

REF: (A) LISBON 6743 (DTG 301637Z AUG 77), (B) LISBON A-259
(DTD SEPT. 23, 1977)(NOTAL)

SUMMARY: POLICE CLASHED WITH RURAL WORKERS NEAR ARRAIOLOS
IN THE UPPER ALENTEJO OVER THE RETURN TO A FARMER'S
COOPERATIVE OF FARM LANDS PREVIOUSLY OCCUPIED BY
COLLECTIVE FARM (UCP) WORKERS. END SUMMARY.

1. THE PRELUDE: THE EVORA AGRARIAN REFORM CENTER NOTIFIED
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COLLECTIVE FARM WORKERS LAST WEEK THAT LAND THEY HAD OCCUPIED
WOULD BE RETURNED TO ITS FORMER OPERATORS ON SEPT. 20.
EARLY THAT DAY WORKERS FROM THE COLLECTIVE AND OTHERS
TRUCKED IN FROM SURROUNDING DISTRICTS BEGAN GATHERING AT
THE FARM. AGRICULTURE MINISTRY PERSONNEL ACCOMPANIED
BY A LARGE GNR CONTINGENT ARRIVED IN MID-AFTERNOON.

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2. THE CLASH: THE WORKERS, ARMED WITH FARM IMPLEMENTS,
BEGAN TO STONE THE POLICE AFTER AN ORDER TO DISPERSE.
IN THE ENSUING CLASH, EIGHT WORKERS AND TWO GNR
MEMBERS WERE INJURED. AGRICULTURE PERSONNEL COMPLETED
THE TRANSFER OF THE LAND AFTER THE INCIDENT, WHILE
THE WORKERS HELD PROTEST MEETINGS IN THE NEIGHBORING
TOWN OF ARRAIOLOS.

3. THE ISSUE: UNLIKE THE PREVIOUS INCIDENTS NEAR EVORA (REFTELS),
THIS CASE DID NOT INVOLVE THE RETURN OF LAND TO AN INDIVIDUAL
PRIVATE LANDOWNER. RATHER, THE AGRICULTURAL MINISTRY WAS RE-
COVERING LAND WHICH HAD BEEN TAKEN FROM A LEGALLY CONSTITUTED
FOUNDATION OPERATED BY AND FOR THE BENEFIT OF ITS WORKERS.
WITHOUT THIS LAND PARCEL, THE FOUNDATION'S ECONOMIC VIABILITY
WAS HIGHLY DUBIOUS.

4. REACTION: IN A COMMUNIQUE ISSUED IMMEDIATELY AFTER
THE INCIDENT, THE NATIONAL SECRETARIAT OF THE COMMUNIST-
DOMINATED CGTP DENOUNCED THE GOVERNMENT'S "REPRESSIVE
MEASURES." THE COMMUNIST PRESS CLAIMED MORE THAN
THIRTY HAD BEEN INJURED IN THE FRACAS AND THAT THE GOP
WAS EMBARKED ON "VIOLENT CAMPAIGN AGAINST AGRARIAN REFORM"
JUST AS "PATRIOTIC FARM WORKERS" WERE BEGINNING THE
AUTUMN PLANTINGS.

5. COMMENT: THIS CLASH APPEARED TO BE A WELL ORGANIZED
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RESISTANCE BY THE OCCUPYING WORKERS TO THE GOVERNMENT'S
INITIATIVE TO RECLAIM THE LAND. BY ACCEPTING THIS
CHALLENGE, THE GOVERNMENT HAS AGAIN DEMONSTRATED ITS
INTENTION TO IMPLEMENT ITS AGRARIAN REFORM POLICIES.
IT HAD SELECTED THIS CASE CAREFULLY KNOWING THAT THE
TASK WAS EASED BECAUSE IT WAS RETURNING THE LAND TO A GROUP
OF COOPERATIVE WORKERS RATHER THAN TO A FORMER WEALTHY LAND-
OWNER.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
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Concepts: PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS, AGRICULTURE, COOPERATIVES, GOVERNMENT REFORM, FARMS, CIVIL DISORDERS
Control Number: n/a
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Sent Date: 22-Sep-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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ISecure: 1
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